

a circle, representing the crown of thorns or the nimbus. The earliest in existence, that was discovered at Dunsbury seems to have belonged to a Saxon church which existed there previous to the Conquest; it is perfectly plain, with a circle round it, the exterior diameter of which is indented.

Not even these escaped the furious zeal of the Puritans. The journal of William Dowling, visiting commissioner, contains the following entry:—

"January, 1640.—We took away two popish inscriptions with *Ora pro nobis*, and we beat down a great shining cross from the top of the chancel." There is a solitary instance of the figure on a gable cross at Than Church, Normandy.

In a succeeding number we hope to illustrate the third division, and show the adaptation of the cross to modern usages. P. P.

HISTORY OF LABOUR IN THE BUILDING CRAFTS.

(Continued from No. 18.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—We have seen that so early as the reign of Edward I., which closed in 1306, the trade and commerce of England had its birth; and, though sustaining struggles that may be aptly likened to those of unprotected infancy, had yet inherent qualities of growth and greatness that have sufficed to grasp and hold dominion in every habitable region of the globe. It may be useful to sketch the state of society at this particular era, the painful efforts made to attain civil rights, and the gradual breaking down of restraints that disconnected the common interests of mankind.

War, agriculture, and commerce constituted the divisions under which were ranged the then scanty population of this great empire; but they existed under circumstances very different to those ruling at the present day. War had been engendered upon the country by the military tenures instituted by the Normans; and the passion and policy that dictated it was cherished with a devotion that rejected all compromise. The demon of military despotism neither bowed its head nor quitted its lair, but craved incessantly oblations of blood and tears; and these were shed abundantly in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. War, plundering, devastating war, sustained the king upon his throne, the baron in his fief, and his retainers in their pride of arrogance and systematic spoliation of the people; hence, in those ages it was the absorbing pursuit to which every other was subservient. Agriculture, imperfectly understood, was at the lowest ebb; and the price of bread corn fluctuated in a fearful manner, while, drained of the able male population, and birthed by exactions uncertain in amount and recurrence, the remaining cultivators of the soil were an abject and unresisting race; commerce and trade, though felt to be essential, were tolerated rather than encouraged. The monetary affairs of the kingdom were mainly in the hands of foreign Jews and Lombards; and so well managed were their plans of operation, that they monopolized or controlled the circulation; yet war in its turn tyrannized over these, and wrong from them the accumulated hoards of usury and extortion, to be again dispersed in the trappings and reckless squanderings of a licentious soldiery. During these perilous times the infant trade and manufacture of England were slowly advancing, and gathering together the waste which its oppressors made. The great truth that "unity is strength" was also beginning to spread, and to rally, as it were, under a banner an aggregate of individual interests: the natural tendency of trade to collect people together, and the lawless character of the times, caused nearly all connected therewith to seek the protection of walled towns. To those places of refuge were also attracted the unwilling and dissatisfied among the followers of the nobility; and this fact, though it may appear of minor importance, had in reality great effect: for while it augmented the numbers of the weaker party, who were ever ready to receive, and by various means to protect them, it greatly diminished the reliance heretofore placed upon the fidelity of military retainers. Men began to see the advantages of trade, that it held out wages and independence, and thus self-interest paved the way to civilization.

In this manner, with but little variation of circumstances, the reign of Edward II., occupying from 1307 to 1326, passed over; and the third Edward entered upon his protracted sway of fifty years. That prince may be said to have possessed tact for governing beyond any of his predecessors: he was glutted with ambition, and sought its gratification by the naked blade; but experience taught him that the prosperity of trade was a faithful index to a healthy state of the exchequer, and he encouraged it by recognition and privileges. The frequent wars in which he was engaged assisted materially in abrogating the feudal system; the numerical amount of his armaments, and length of time they were kept on foot, introduced a more

general mode of levying troops than that of requiring the nobles to produce and maintain their respective quotas in the field. Ancient jealousies and private feuds were also reconciled in the common emulation and common dangers in which a long companionship in arms associated the leaders of Edward's hosts, while in the lower ranks were large numbers of the vassals of the crown, emancipated in consideration of special military services. The era of war was now working great changes in neutralizing the local domination of a legion of petty tyrants, which thenceforth remained concentrated in the kingly power; personal oppression was less frequent, and taxes levied with some approach to just apportionment. These ameliorations were more quickly felt by the trading than any other interest, and the pecuniary difficulties of the king caused still further concessions; among others, the woollen manufacture, then the staple of the kingdom, was improved by the importation of Flemish weavers and clothworkers, and the trade secured by a grant of corporate laws and the erection of guilds. This movement in advance was, however, interrupted by the great pestilence of 1349; in cities and towns nearly half the population was swept off, and a suspension not only of trading occupations, but even of religious services, took place, and scarce any could be found to perform the last offices for the dead. The result of this visitation was a scarcity of labour, which gave rise to a revival of arbitrary display, and the measures which power is ever ready to devise and inflict; the real scarcity of any commodity has always been held a reasonable cause for advancing prices, but in this instance the legislature was found ready to pass an unjust law to regulate wages. A master free mason was declared by statute to be entitled to no more than 4d. a day for his wages, other masons 3d.; a master carpenter 3d., other carpenters 2d.; their servants or helpers 1½d.; plasterers 3d.; tilers 3d.—imprisonment and sitting in the stocks being the punishment for refusal to work, or requiring higher wages. This legalized robbery upon labour appears to have borne heaviest between the years 1350 and 1370, but there is reason to believe that it was evaded and opposed by the classes to which the law applied with considerable vigour, for we find that repeated appeals were made to the Commons for yet more stringent enactments. In 1360, the former statute of labour was confirmed and enforced, under penalty of fifteen days' imprisonment, and branding in the forehead with the letter F, for offenders who absented themselves from their work, or quitted their place of abode; and if they fled to towns, magistrates were to deliver them up, under a penalty of 10s. to the king, and 5s. to the master reclaiming them. TRADE UNIONS, or co-operative societies, were no doubt in existence at this time; those of the FREE MASONRY would alone have furnished a sufficient example to other trades, and from the wording of a clause in this same statute, it would clearly appear to have been aimed as well against their lodges as other societies of a like description. The attention of the BUILDING CRAFTS should be fixed upon these historical facts, from which they will gather that even in despotic times trade unions existed, were to a certain extent effective, and of sufficient weight and importance to call forth a legislative attempt to coerce them. Such societies under matured regulations are useful and meritorious. A Wiltshire guild, or Council in every handicraft trade, apart from short-sighted views of concealing strikes, would be of infinite value; acting as with one mind, and speaking with one voice the legitimate claims of such a body to attention, and upon just grounds, to redress, would be irresistible. Talk of combinations, what are governments but combinations? What but combinations of civil and military power, upheld by the finances of a country, to the end that order may be preserved, and that the oppressor do no flagrant wrong? What are joint stock companies but combinations? Is their commercial spirit higher, purer, or less interested than that of great associations of the producers of wealth, alert to procure a fair equivalent for honest labour? What the alliance of the great builder with the capitalist but a combination of skill with money, to the end that success shall be commanded?

The statute of 1360 says: "that all alliances and covins of masons, carpenters, and others, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths between them made, should be thenceforth void and wholly annulled." We have here a specimen of the disposition of the legislature to prostrate the working classes; it set out with fixing a rate of wages, and denounced attempt to raise them under penalty of a brand mark; and how does it close? why, with the following enactment: "Every lord, or other, may make bargain or covenant for their work in gross with such artificers or labourers when it please them, so that they perform such work well and lawfully, according to the covenant or bargain with them thereof made." The workman

was already compellable to accept his 3d. or 4d. per diem, or to suffer the indignities I have recited; but if the lord or master could induce him, either under misapprehension or extremity of any kind, to take piece-work, such lord was at liberty to mulct him with impunity, or to compel the fulfilment of the bargain by a ratio of labour beyond physical endurance.

VINDIC.

(To be continued.)

ON TUDOR ARCHITECTURE.

(Continued from page 227.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—A better taste is certainly gaining ground for pure architecture, both for church and domestic purposes, and it will not be long before we shall see banished for the future such trash as is forcibly called "Carpenter's Gothic," when it will not be considered that by sticking a few buttresses against a wall where they are not wanted, by enclosing a roof with an embattled parapet, putting labels over common windows, and scattering here and there a few pinnacles, and all clumsily got up in compo, a Gothic design has been achieved. The suburbs of London can readily furnish proofs that some persons have innocently indulged the belief that by using all the features above named they have succeeded in presenting to the gaze of the admiring beholder a chaste Gothic building, ignorant all the while that the true spirit of the old English builders may be entirely lost sight of, even if all the details mentioned are employed, and that the same spirit may exist in a composition into which not one of them may be introduced.



"A Gothic Villa" of the Cockney school.

In our admiration of the beauty of the Tudor style, we must not forget what its original adaptors were to a great extent limited in the materials at their disposal, and it would surely be the extreme of folly in us to refuse to call in the aid of modern improvements, more especially when their adoption cannot change or affect the general character of the style. But the too-zealous stickler for copying every thing which is to be found in early models will insist, for instance, that we should still employ the leaden casement with its small quantity of glass, rather than avail ourselves of the splendid plate-glass of modern days, and the greater comfort of the sash; we might as well be expected to retain the rushes of former times for our floors in preference to our present luxury of carpets. As applicable to our streets there appears no reason why the Tudor style should not be employed with more effect, and at less cost than much that is perpetrated in the so-called classic styles. It is this writer's belief that there can be no good street architecture as long as it is a fashion to elude together several houses into one design, wherein a few columns and pilasters are carried (apparently) upon next to nothing—glass. This is a process that may save thought, but it can never inspire genius. The great charm of our ancient street architecture no doubt arose from the individuality, so to term it, of the buildings; each house was a picture in itself, with its projecting gables, richly-carved barge-boards, quaint devices, and elaborate carvings in real wood and stone, whilst a row of such houses, alike in character but differing in detail, presented a gorgeous whole such as the eye could fondly dwell upon and the painter delight to sketch, but which it is vain to hope to find in these days of stucco, papier-mâché, and putty. And what has been gained in point of effect by the introduction in our leading thoroughfares (which are so splendid in their length and in their breadth) of that which is called classical architecture, executed as it is in fictitious materials? Is any one, even the most casual observer, deceived by the stuccoed imitations of stone? he has only to turn his view to a line of buildings, and he will find as many different complexions as there are houses, varying from a magnesian white through